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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Mozambique

SUBJECT Nacala Port Facilities/Railway Connections/Nature of Traffic

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[The Office of Naval Intelligence furnished the following information to CIA for IAC dissemination in accordance with paragraph 3c of NSCID #7. This information was obtained by DIO-3ND and was forwarded as ONI report 82-54.]

1. General: Nacala is a landlocked, spacious, natural harbor with a very wide protected entrance.
2. Port Facilities: Present port facilities consist of one lighter quay with two large covered sheds, several small mobile cranes, six lighters, and a small tug. The railway tracks run to the end of the quay so that the trucks unload directly into lighters. Ocean going ships can anchor close to the quay so that lighters need only to be towed a few hundred feet. This is a great advantage over the port of Mocambique where lighters have to be towed five miles from the mainland rail terminus at Lumbo to the usual ship anchorage off the island of Mozambique. The Portuguese have made plans for the further development of both the port and the town of Nacala, and if traffic continues to develop they expect to construct one or more deep water berths depending on the need. This should not be too difficult or too costly as the harbor bottom shelves off to 30 feet and more within a few yards of the shoreline.
3. Railway Connections: Nacala is served by a branch of the railway line running from Lumbo to the northwestern part of Mozambique. This line extends about 350 miles inland and the Portuguese are at present surveying a route for a possible extension to the line which would take it another one hundred miles to the shores of Lake Nyasa and enable it to serve parts of Nyasaland, parts of the Rhodesias, and possibly southwestern Tanganyika.
4. Traffic: The principal commodities carried on the above-mentioned railway passing through Nacala are sisal grown along the coastal belt, tea grown further inland on the plateaus, cotton exported principally to Portugal, and beans and other agricultural commodities which do not move to the US. There is also a large cashew nut crop grown along the coast which is exported to India for processing prior to shipment to the US. Tobacco is also grown inland, but it is used almost entirely for local consumption. Some beryll ore is exported through Nacala, and this comes from up-country mines in an area where they are endeavoring to develop deposits of copper and other minerals.

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5. Prospect: If it is found feasible to extend the railway line, Nacala would presumably receive some agricultural products and minerals for export which now move through Beira, as the new route would offer more economical transportation to a large area. However, as there is difficult terrain throughout this particular area, it is not believed that there is any possible chance of the extension for at least several years.

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